

# In Gnome Man's Land

By  
Von G.

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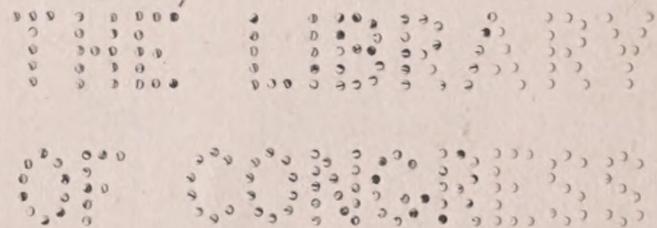
# **IN GNOME MAN'S LAND**



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LAND

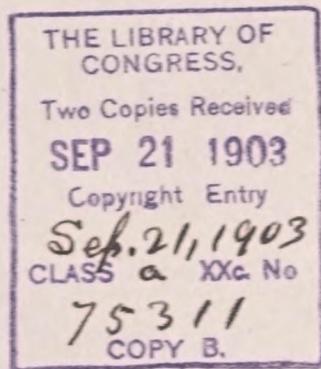
BY

O. H. VON GOTTSCHALK



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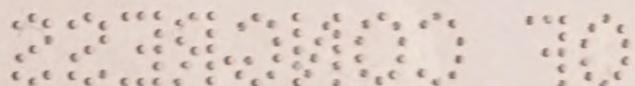


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Von G.

The trees are bedecked with their dresses of plaid,  
The air's crisp and bright and the song birds are glad,  
Yet Willie, disconsolate, wanders around  
And wishes he knew how the trees underground,  
After dying, the very next spring bloom again.  
"They must live," he declares, "in a Fairy's domain."

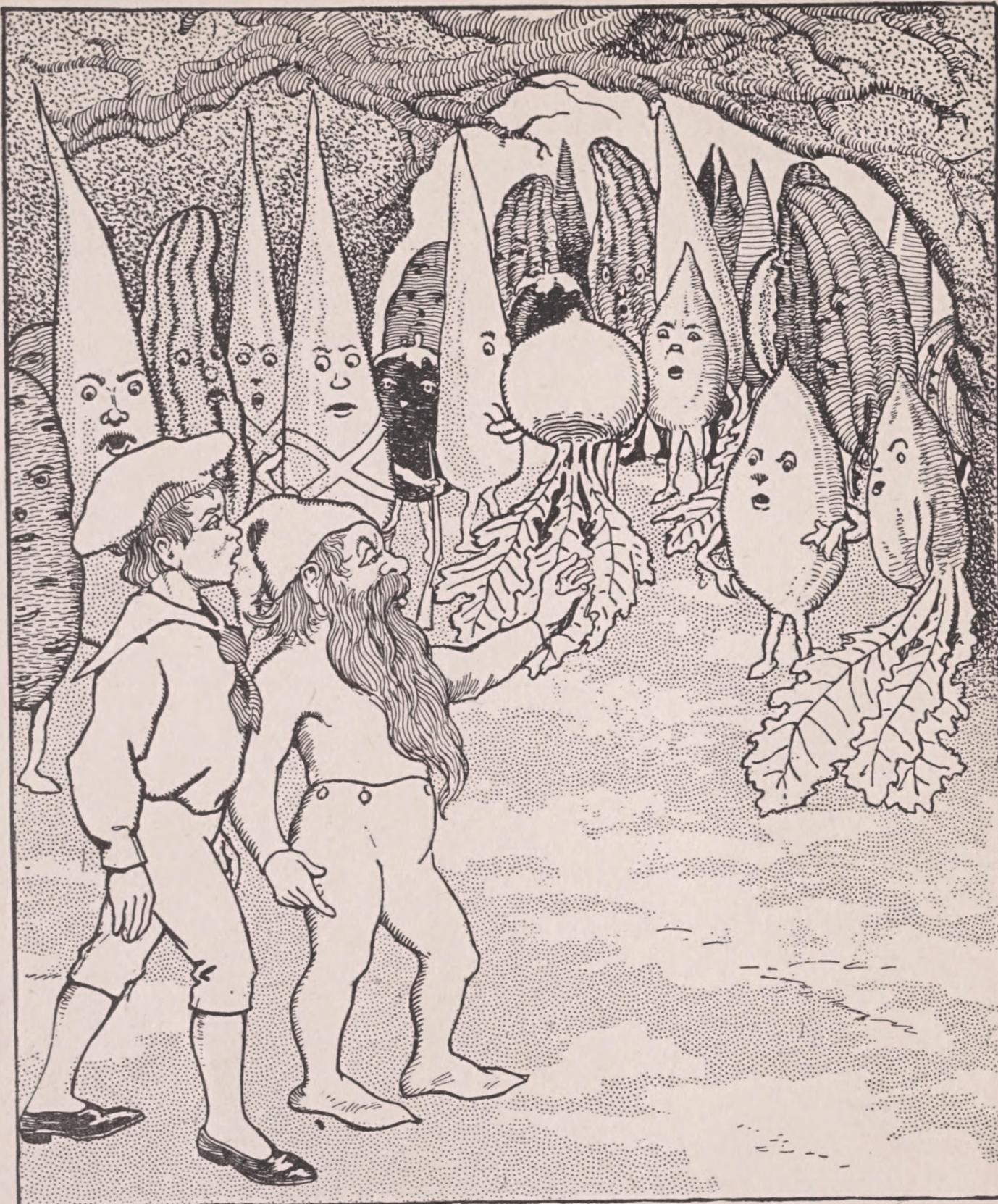


Von G.

"Very true, little lad," speaks a bright, cheery voice.  
" 'Tis a marvelous realm that they enter from choice.  
You're invited to call and your guide I will be.  
So come with me now if you're anxious to see."  
Then the sly little Gnome, with a wink of one eye,  
Made Willie, our friend, about three knuckles high.



Their journey commenced at a hole near a rock,  
Where bouncing black beetles gave Willie a shock.  
The cave was quite dark, but it soon became light,  
And Willie beheld a most wonderful sight;  
For, jostling and crowding, tramp, tramp, o'er the floor,  
A vegetable army marched in through a door.



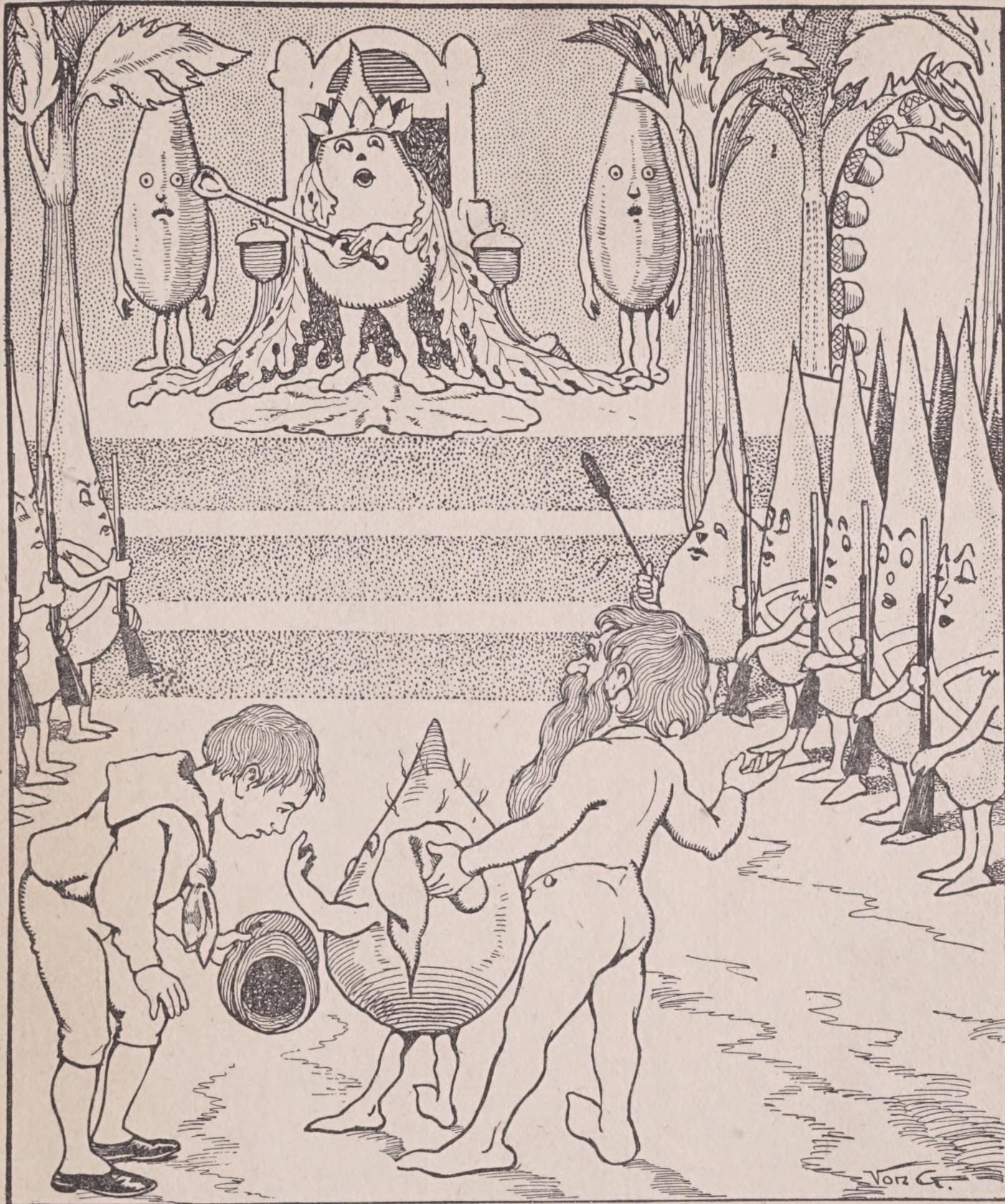
Some neat Carrot soldiers stood nobly at ease  
And looked at our Willie as bold as you please.  
Each Turnip and Carrot, Potato and Beet,  
Cucumber and Onion, had small hands and feet.  
"Make way," cried the Gnome, "for a mortal is here  
To pay his respect to your monarch so dear!"



A little, fat Turnip then gave a command,  
And quickly in line fell the Spring Radish Band;  
The neat Carrot soldiers, with cheer after cheer,  
Then shouldered their guns and fell in at the rear,  
And forward they marched through the vegetable throng.  
To "rub-a-dub-dub!" taking Willie along.



'Neath arches of Acorns festooned with Fireflies,  
Mid palms of the Rhubarb and caged crickets' cries,  
Past flower beds of Lettuce, all fragrant with earth,  
They marched two by two, hearing music and mirth,  
To where the great King, at the end of the hall,  
Was giving his subjects their annual ball.



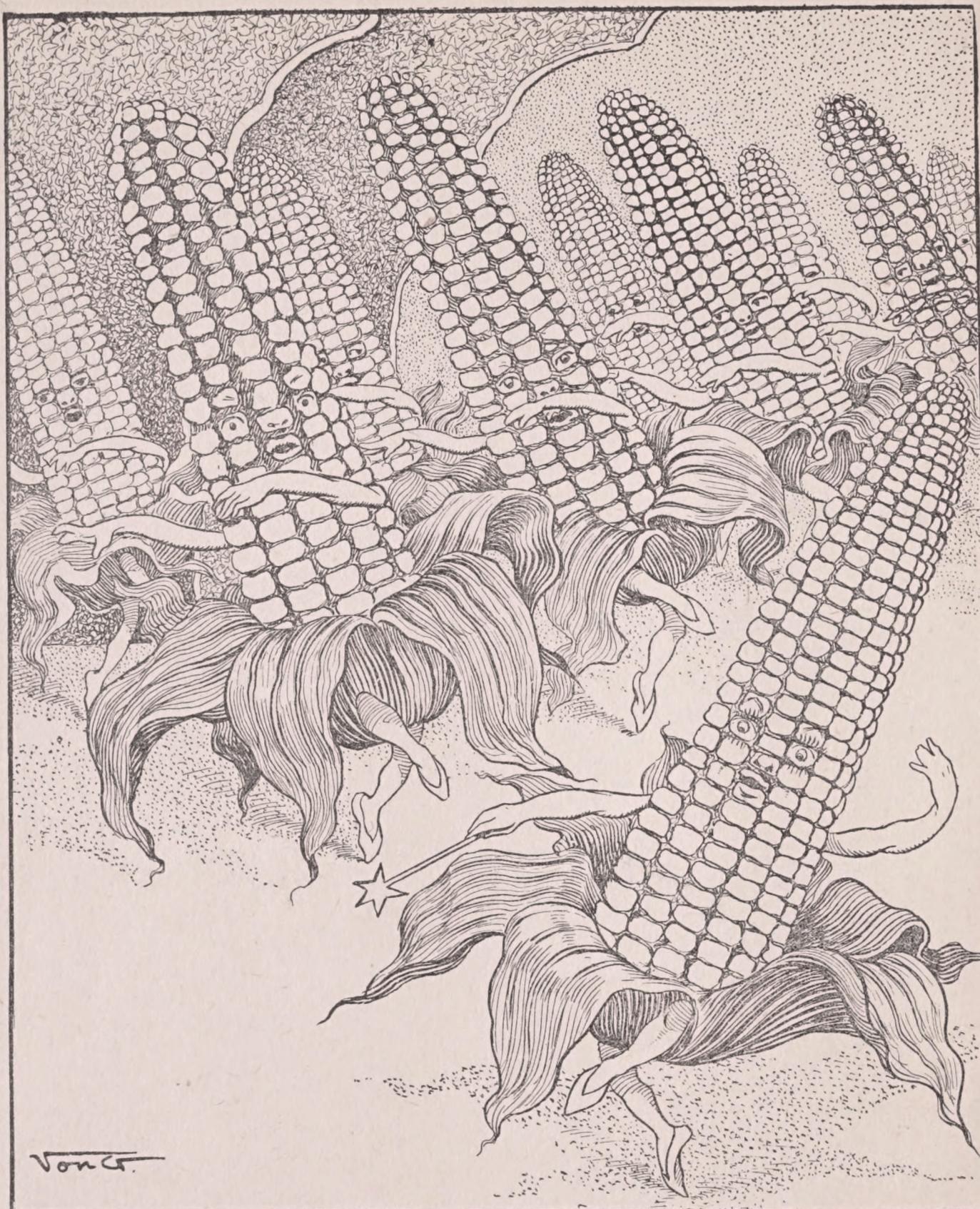
"A boy!" cried the Monarch. "And why comes he here?  
To feast on our freshest and youngest, I fear!"  
"No, sire," said the Gnome; "he's not hungry and we  
Are bound for the Kingdom of Flowers, you see,  
And crave your permission, for pass your domain  
We must ere we come to the flowers again."



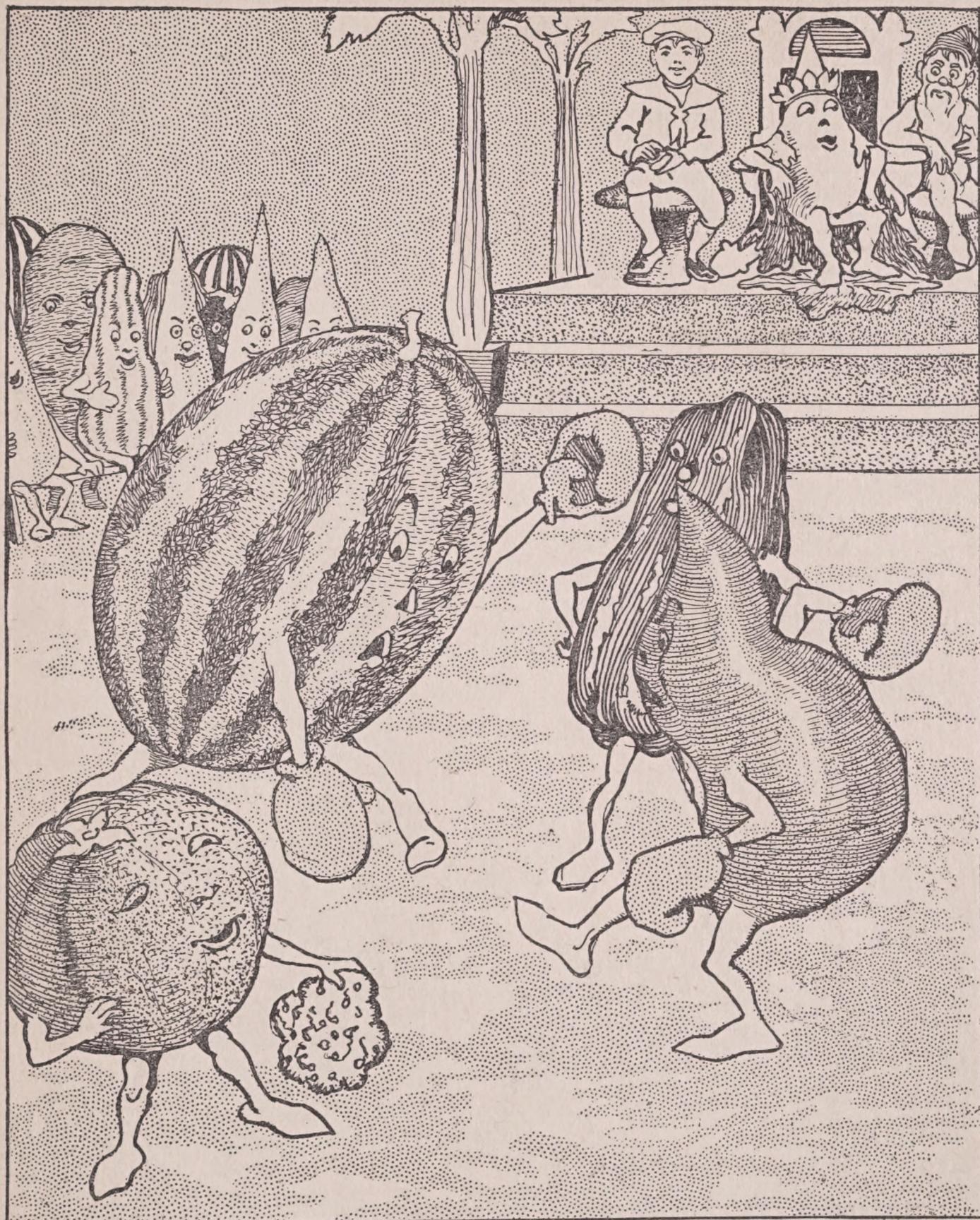
“‘Tis granted, but ere you proceed on your way  
I hope in my kingdom you’ll make a short stay.”  
Then Willie in state saw each phase of the ball—  
The Katydid Orchestra up on the wall.  
The vegetables dancing, the supper room grand—  
And all was quite gay till the King raised his hand.



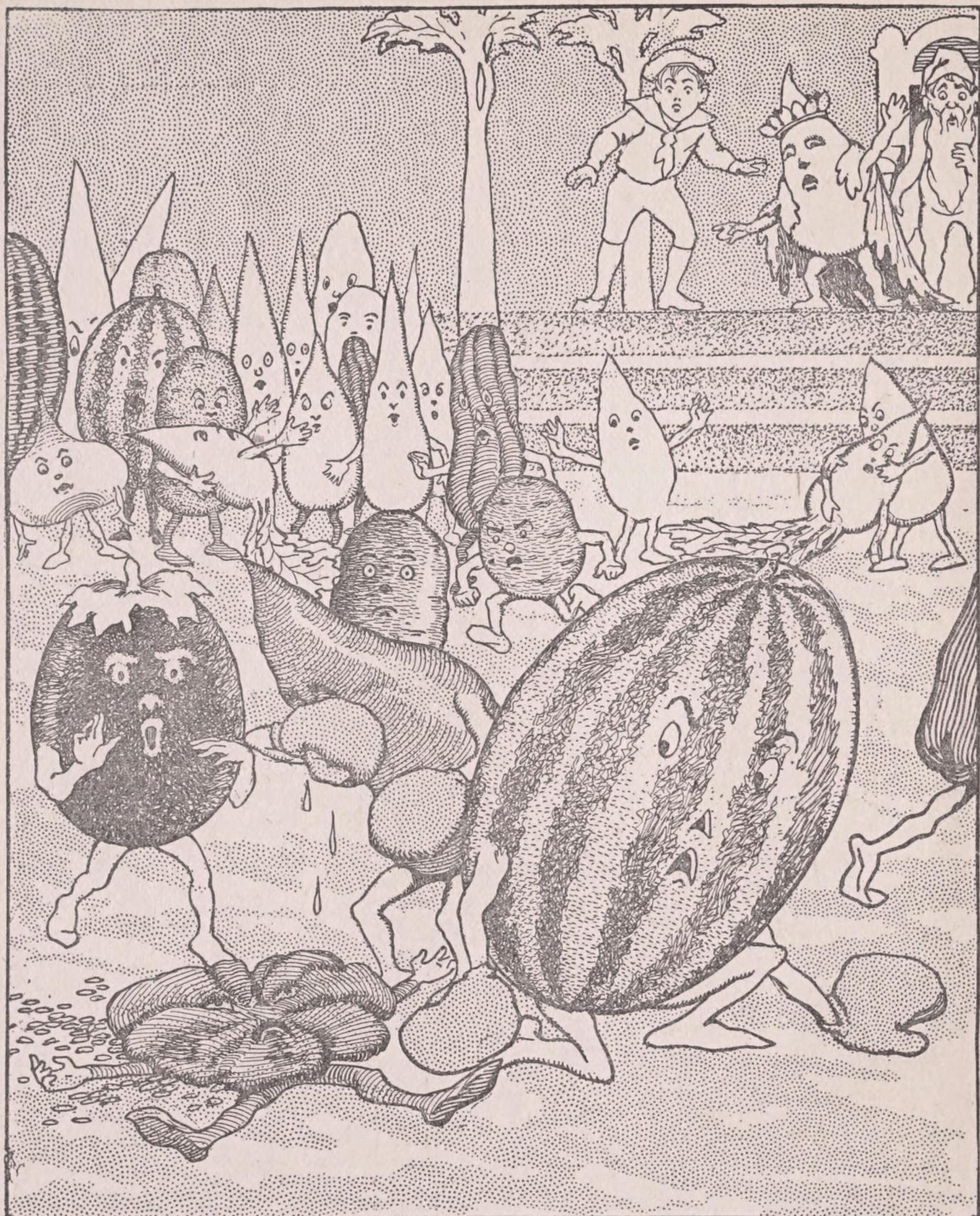
The ball is not over, yet guests, one and all,  
Take seats in long rows round the queer banquet hall,  
And up near the throne with the King and the Gnome,  
Poor Willie is trying to feel quite at home,  
When out steps a Cucumber, slender and long.  
"The Royal Corn Ballet!" he shouts to the throng.



Then, swishing soft husks of bright yellow and green,  
*The Sweetest Corn Ballet makes brilliant the scene.*  
The dancers are nimble, they twine in and out,  
And twist and spin round till the vegetables shout.  
*The King cracks a joke: "Aren't they funny, the dears?  
They seem to have eyes, but you see they're all ears!"*



A heavyweight Melon who weighed sev'ral pounds  
Boxed Young Sweet Potato a few lively rounds,  
And each time he landed Potato struck back  
So hard Willie feared that fat Melon would crack,  
But Melon was game, and, to Willie's surprise,  
He outpunched Potato and blacked both his eyes.



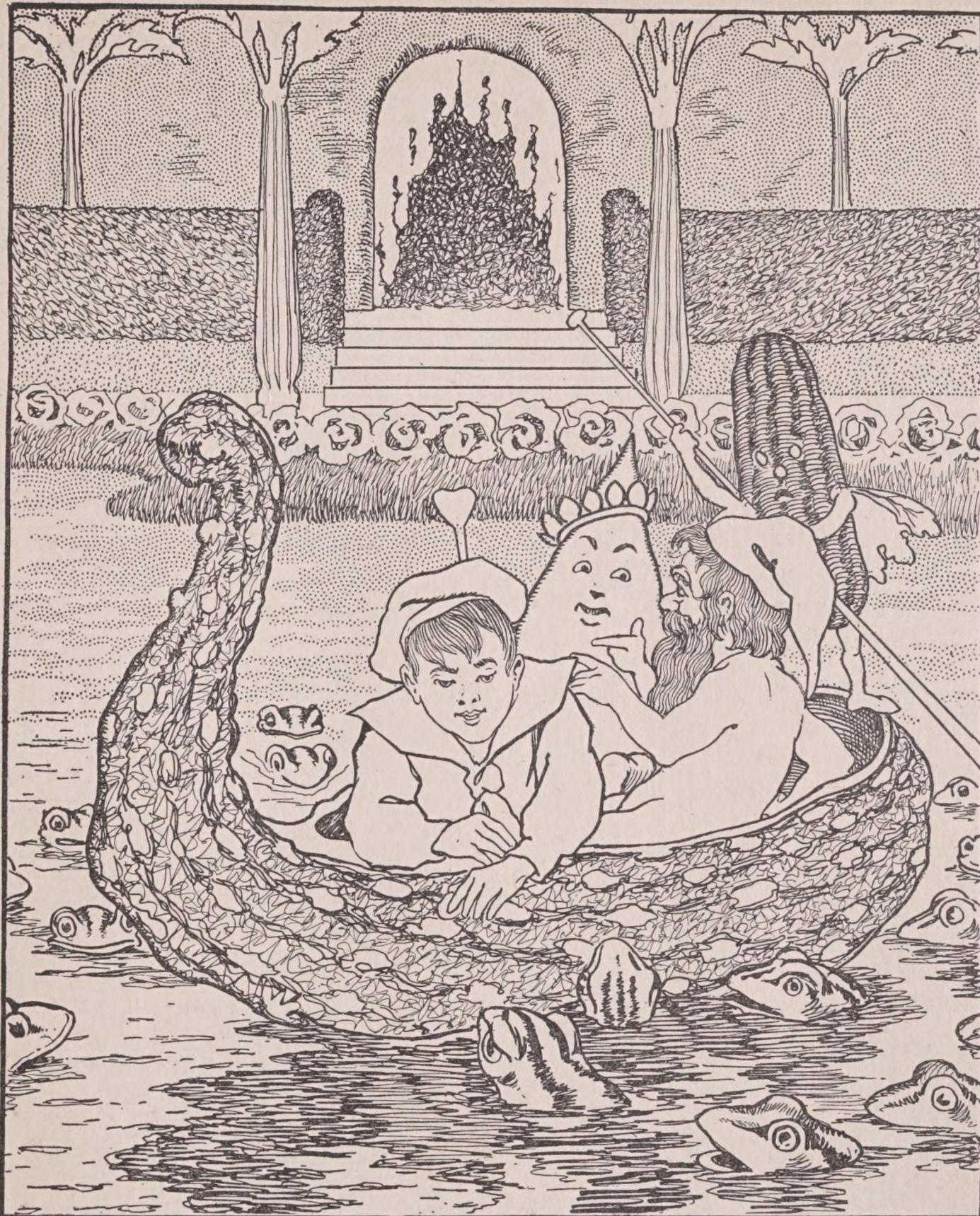
Tomato, his second, was watching the fray,  
And during a scuffle he got in the way.  
Potato struck Melon and down Melon sat  
Kerplunk on Tomato and squashed him quite flat!  
"Poor Tom was too ripe!" cried the King in dismay.  
"So mop him up quickly and take him away!"



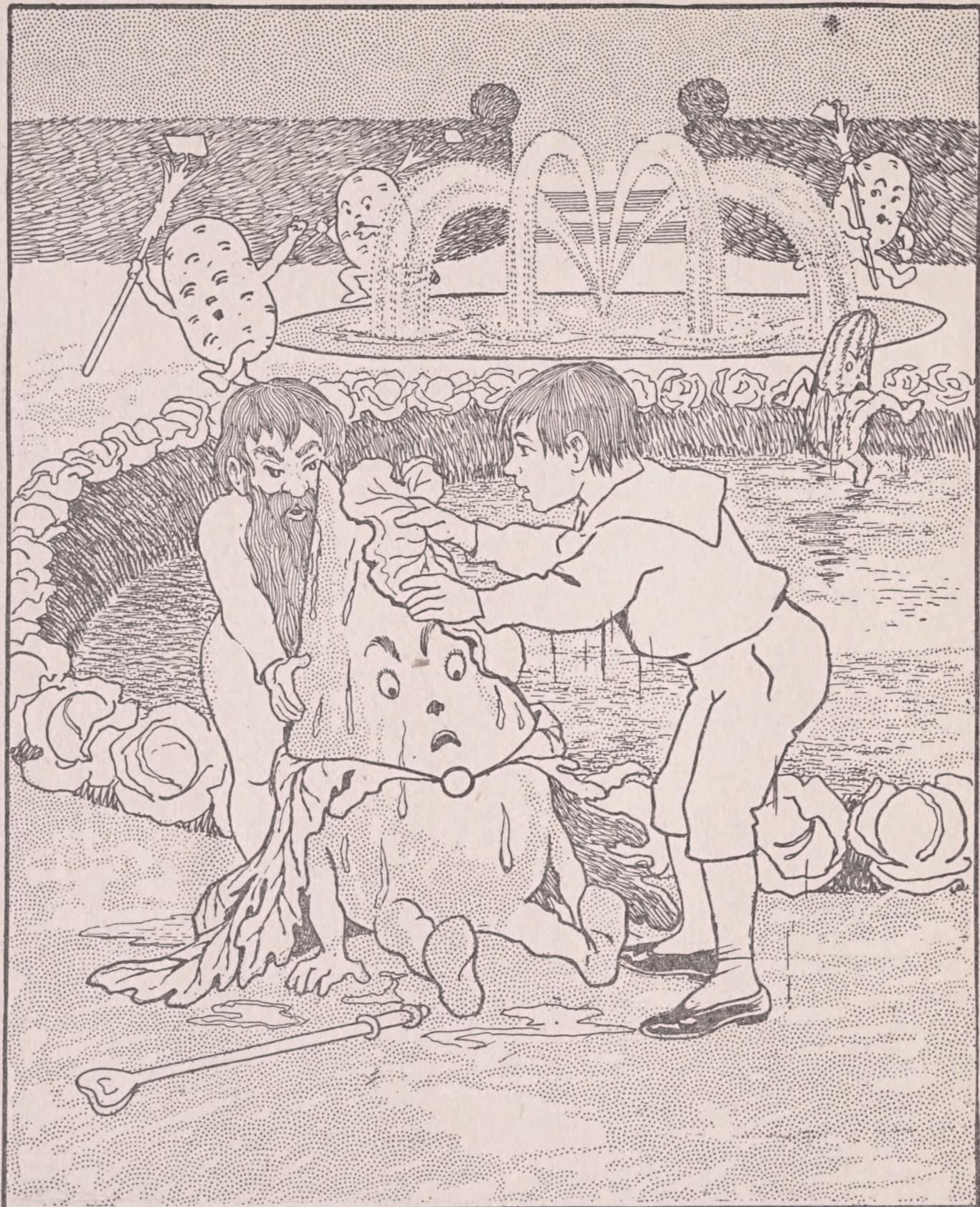
A wonderful room was the Bedroom of State  
To which Willie went when the hour was quite late.  
Four toadstools unique were the posts of the bed,  
A spider web canopy hung overhead.  
The spread was of corn silk a silkworm had knit,  
The light was a candle a firefly had lit.



At breakfast the King served a very queer meal;  
Instead of thick cream and a lot of oatmeal  
They ate bottled sunshine and drank potted air,  
With plenty of water. "A plain bill of fare,  
I know," said the King, "but you'll thrive on it here,  
And grow big and strong, too, my lad, never fear."



"My gondola waits," said the King, "and we'll take  
A ride for an hour on my Underground Lake."  
They walked to the shore and were all soon afloat  
And speeding around in a Summer Squash Boat.  
Our Willie was happy as happy could be  
And fed the tame frogs till they croaked in their glee.



The frogs were so thick that the boat was upset,  
And Willie, the King and the Gnome all got wet.  
The Cucumber boatman in fright ran away,  
While up came the guards in the greatest dismay.  
Our friends quickly went to the wet King's relief  
And rubbed him quite dry with a big cabbage leaf.



Von G.

A lady quite stout was the Vegetable Queen,  
Her scribe was a Cucumber slender and lean,  
Her pet caterpillars like dogs ran about,  
Except when from gorging they suffered with gout.  
She heard that our Willie had come to her land.  
And had the boy call by her royal command.



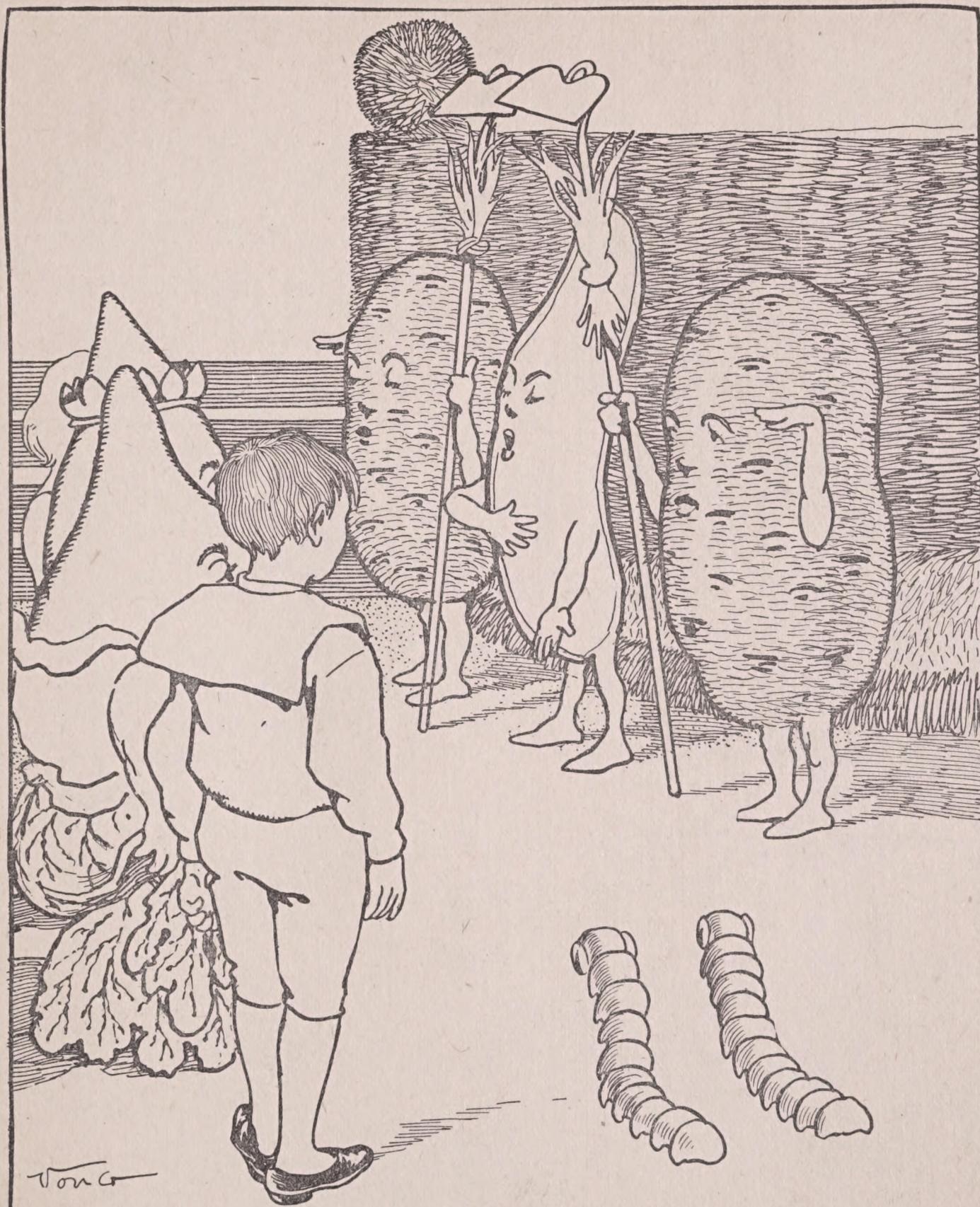
The King introduced him as Willie came near,  
The Queen fixed her lorgnette and murmured, "How queer!"  
The tame caterpillars each made an odd bow,  
To show this strange mortal that they well knew how,  
And Willie shrank back as he said in mock fright,  
"I hope, gracious lady, your dogs do not bite!"



The Queen and our Willie, the King and the Gnome,  
All strolled in the gardens around the King's home.  
The butterflies' cage was aglow with bright wings.  
"They're rare," said the Queen; "for the beautiful things  
Escaped from the Land of the Flowers, you see.  
And here they are caged for His Highness and me."



"These spiders, of course, lack the butterflies' grace,  
But weave for us daily most exquisite lace,  
And only their keeper dare go in their cage  
Because they get angry and bite in their rage."  
The keeper held up for our Willie to view  
A marvelous shawl with a pattern quite new.



A Pea Porridge showman who had a great show  
Came in under guard of two Halberds de Hoe  
To beg that the King and his friends would all view  
His wonderful circus so grand and so new.  
The King and the Queen both exclaimed in delight,  
"We'll go, Willie dear, to the circus this night!"

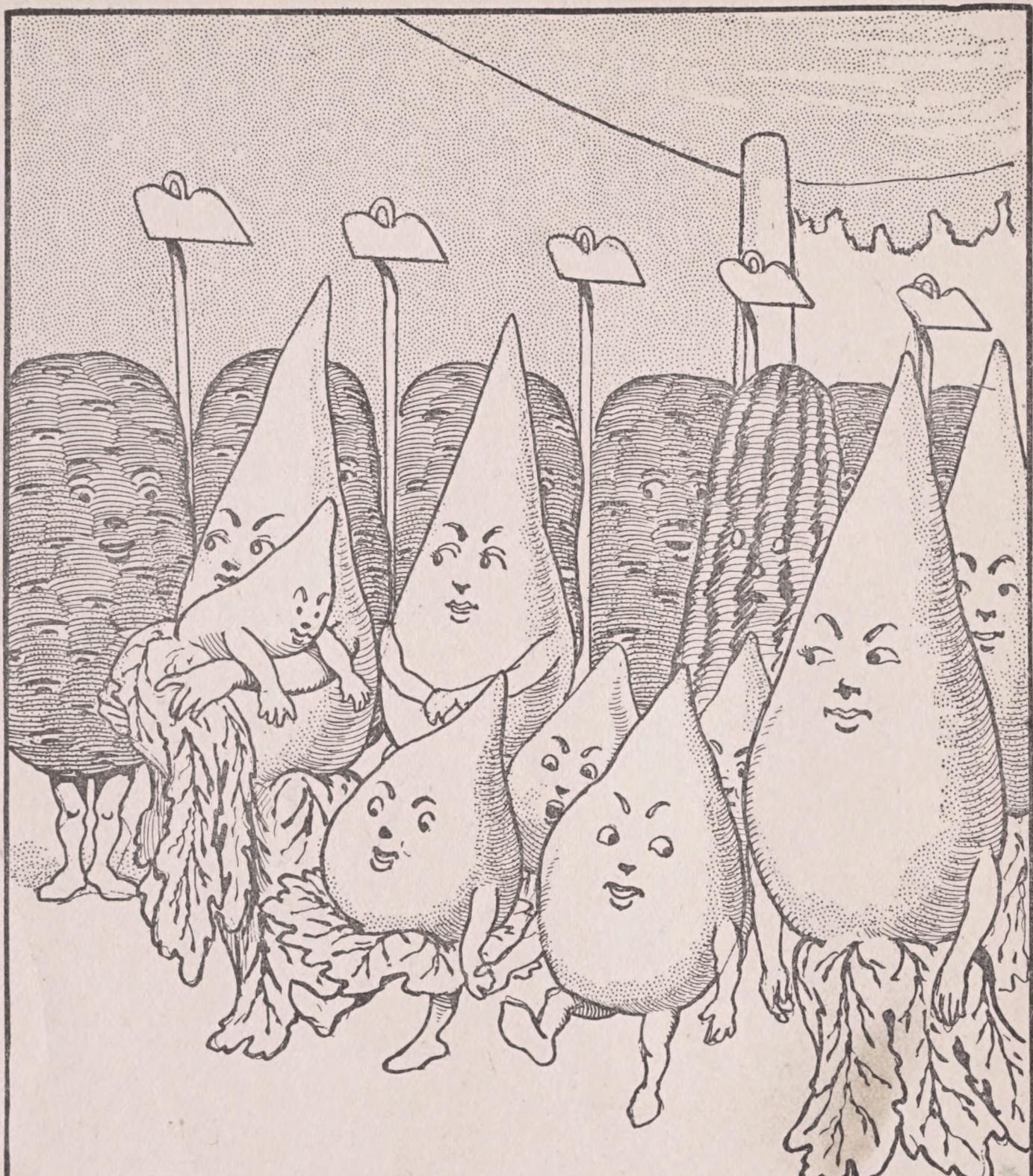


The nursery playroom they next went to see.  
Each child was as noisy as noisy could be.  
One, teasing his grasshopper cat on the floor,  
Was filling the room with an awful uproar.  
Another was screeching, "Don't put me to bed!"  
Another had tumbled and bumped its poor head.



Von C.

Drawn up into line were *the Halberds de Hoe*  
As Willie set out on his way to the *show*.  
*The King and the Gnome* were the first to be seen,  
Then Willie came next, side by side with *the Queen*,  
Who brought her two pets, while her long, trailing skirt,  
Was held by two Pages aloft from *the dirt*.

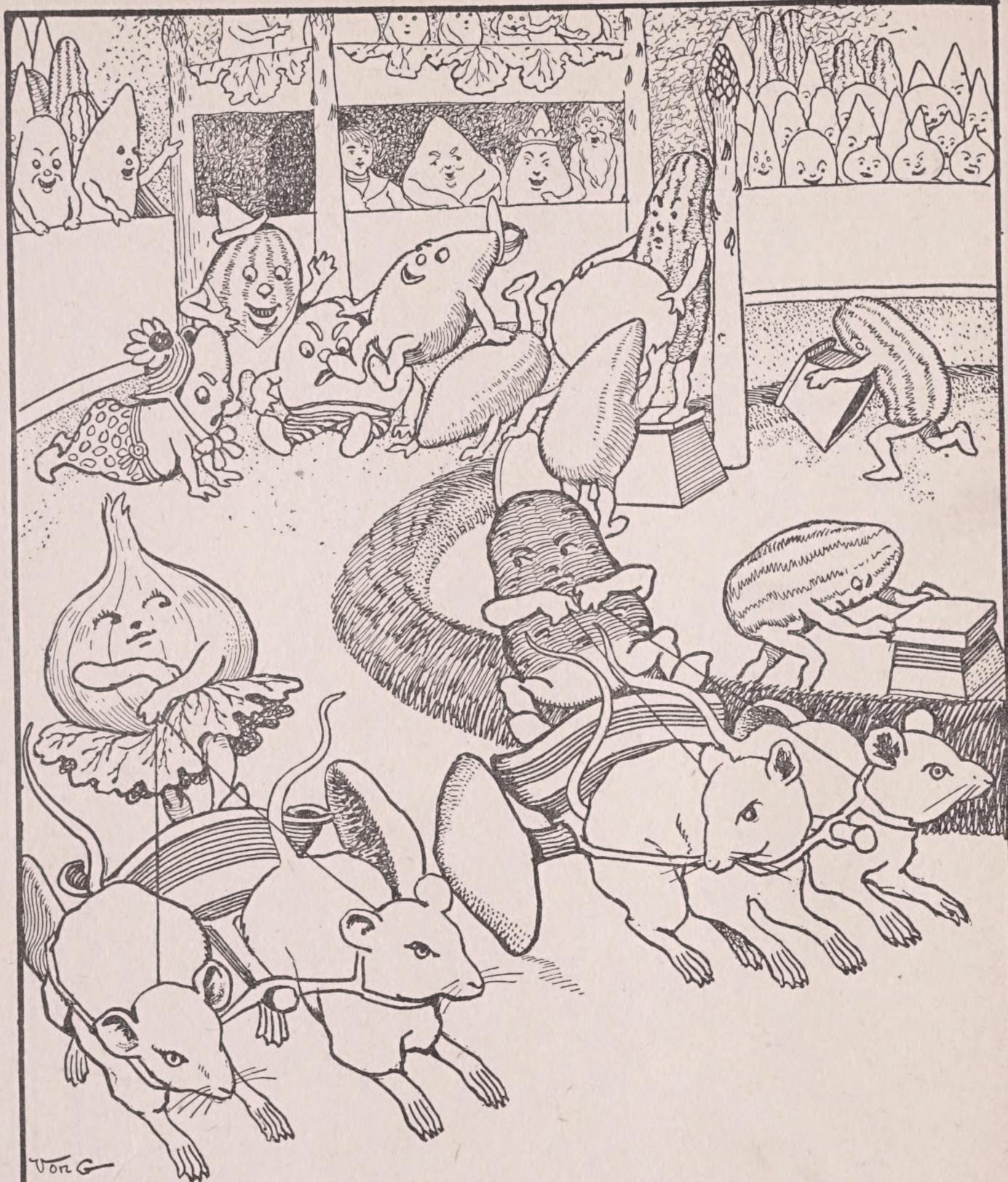


—VON G—

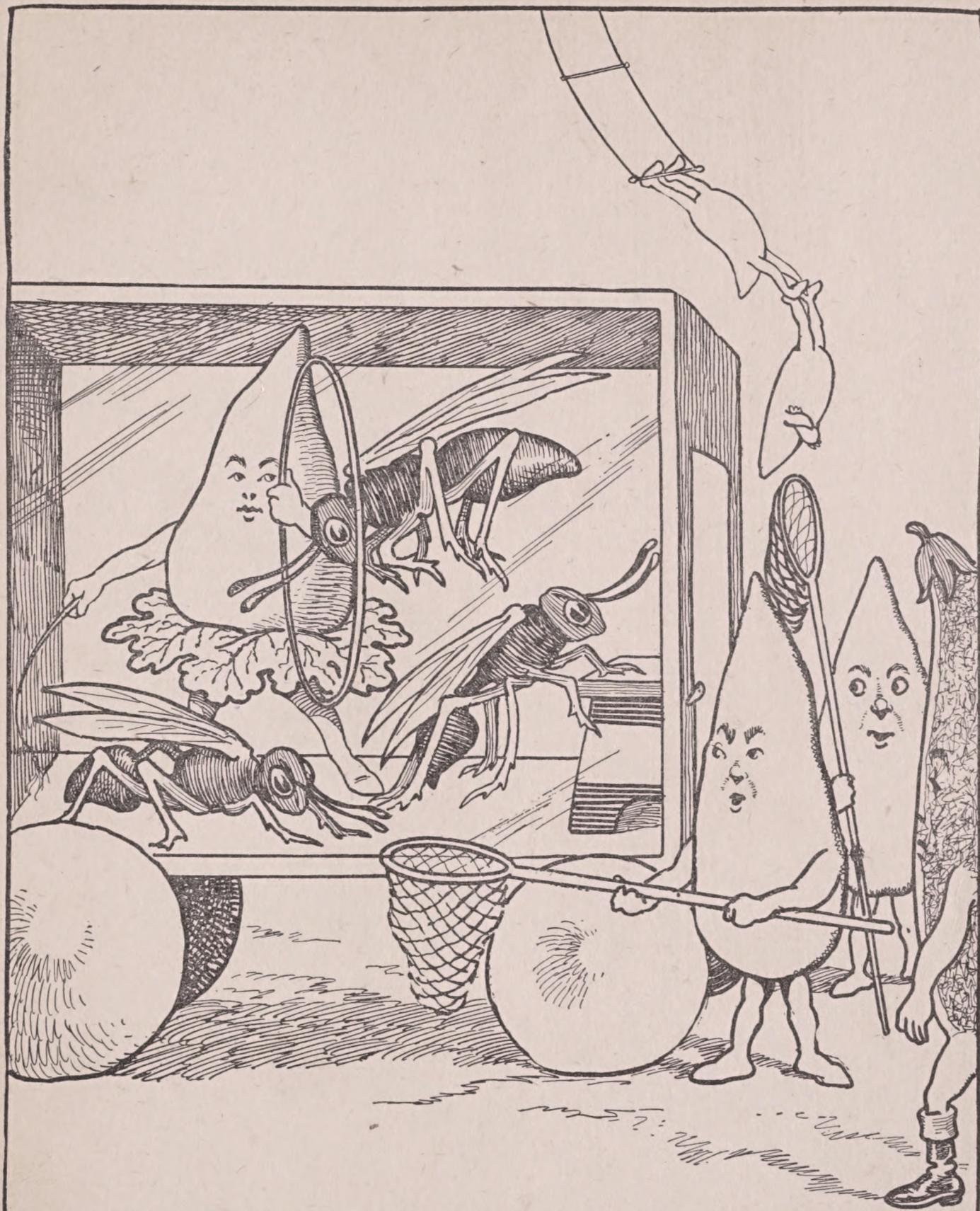
The Nurses, each walking in manner sedate,  
As practiced and taught by all Ladies of State,  
Came leading the children, who thought all this pomp  
Was almost as funny as having a romp;  
And one bright Nurse murmured, "Most poetry's slow,  
But I like 'The Vegetable Man With the Hoe.' "



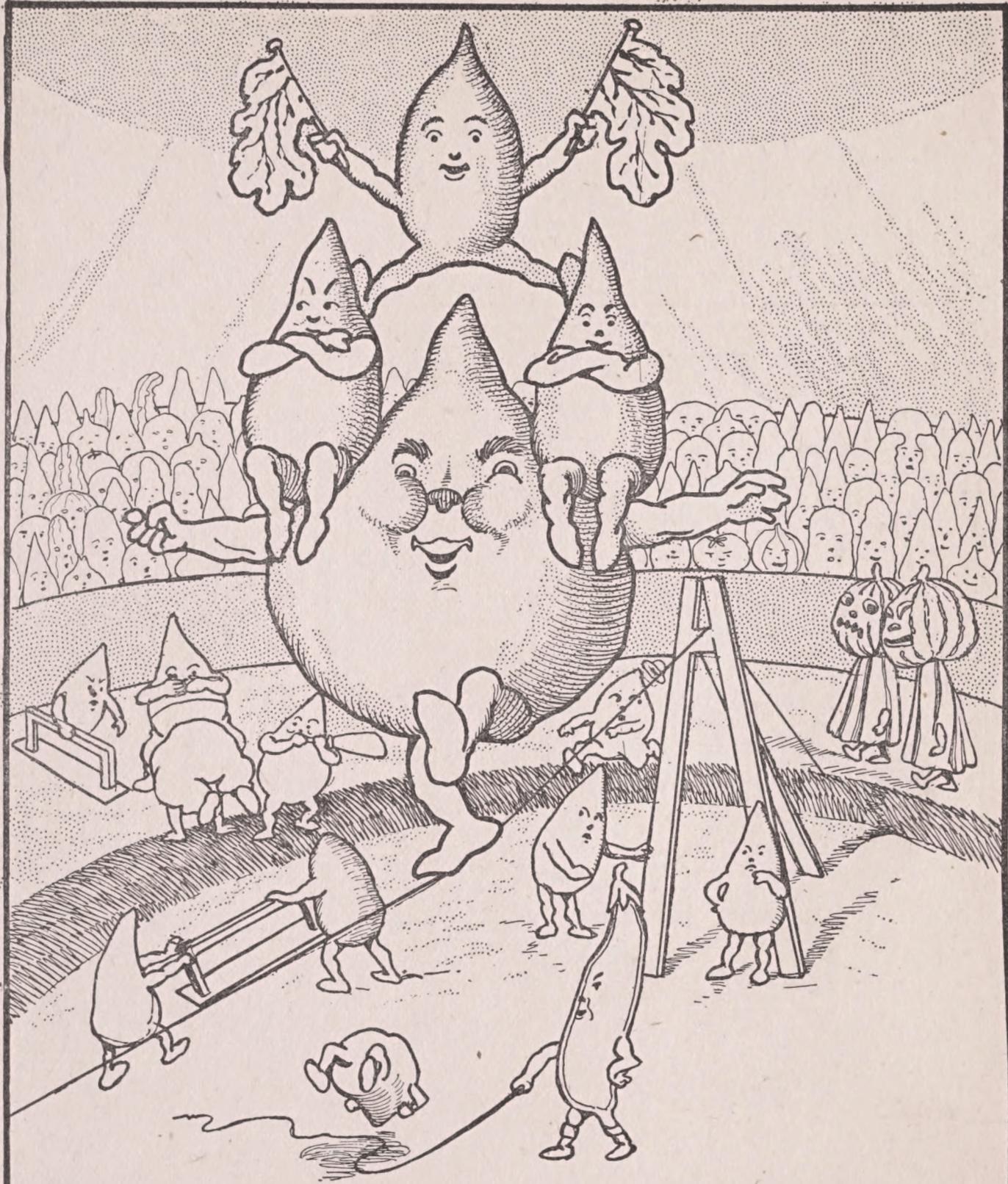
When Willie sat down in the box of the King,  
The circus parade made a tour of the ring.  
The Vegetable Band, with its trumpets and drums,  
Led off with "ta-ra-ras!" and "rumpty-tum-tums!"  
Two elephant snails set a very warm pace  
And then came the mice for the chariot race.



The clowns next made merry with tumbles and jokes  
And loud were the laughs of the Vegetable folks.  
The chariot racers then made a bold dash  
Out into the ring and drove round like a flash,  
And fair Onion Lady, who did not fear mice,  
Outraced Young Potato and won in a trice.



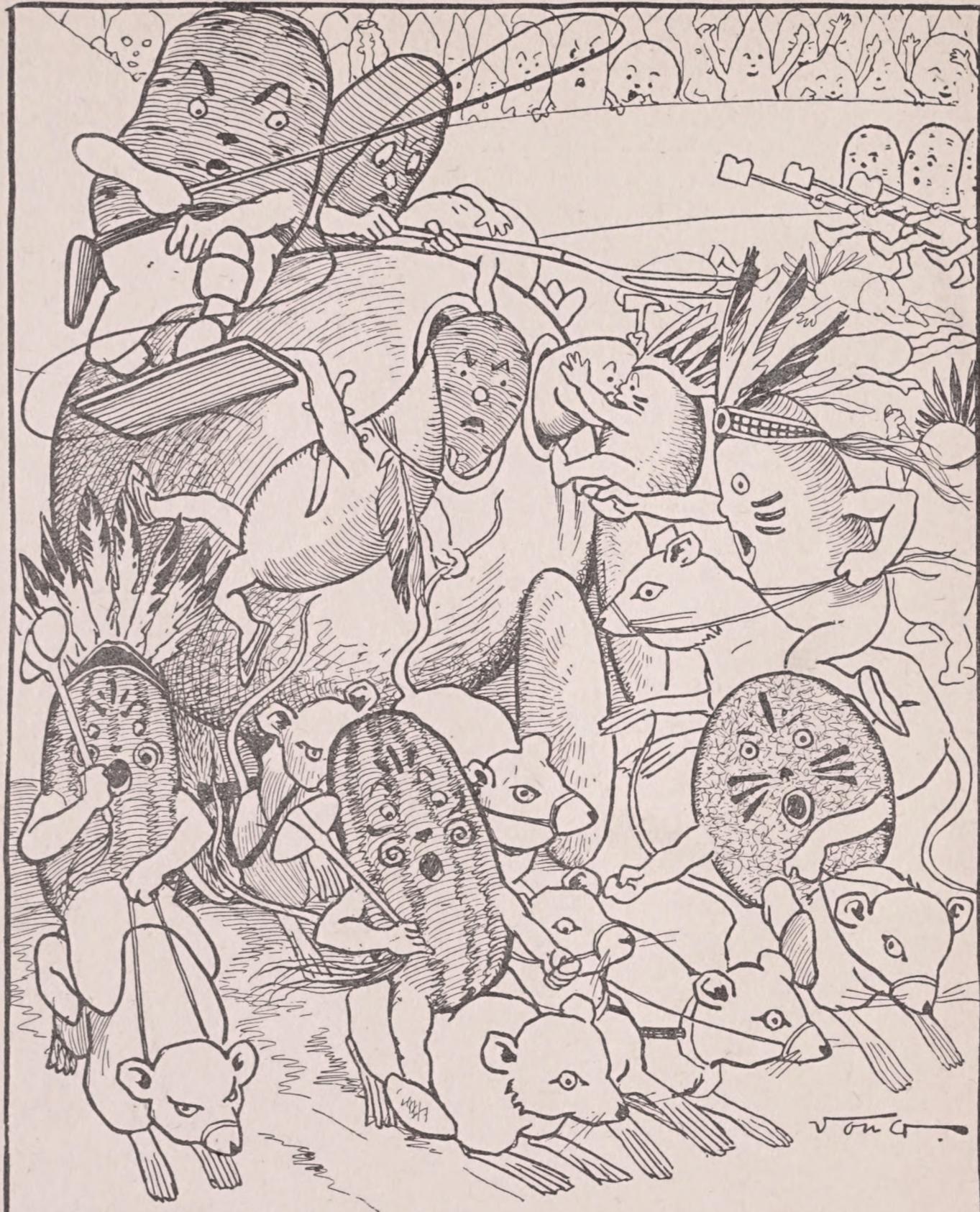
***The Wasp Taming Queen in her glass covered cage,  
With Tiger Wasps prowling around her in rage,  
Next showed how the fiercest of beasts would obey  
And made the Wasps romp like tame kittens at play.  
Around the glass cage they would canter and skip,  
And jump through a hoop at the crack of her whip.***



The circus ring helpers next stretched a tight rope  
And smeared it all over with lather and soap.  
The Spring Radish Brothers and Signor De Beet  
Then did a soap walk—quite a hair raising feat—  
While down in the ring every clown did his best  
To keep the folks laughing with horseplay and jest.



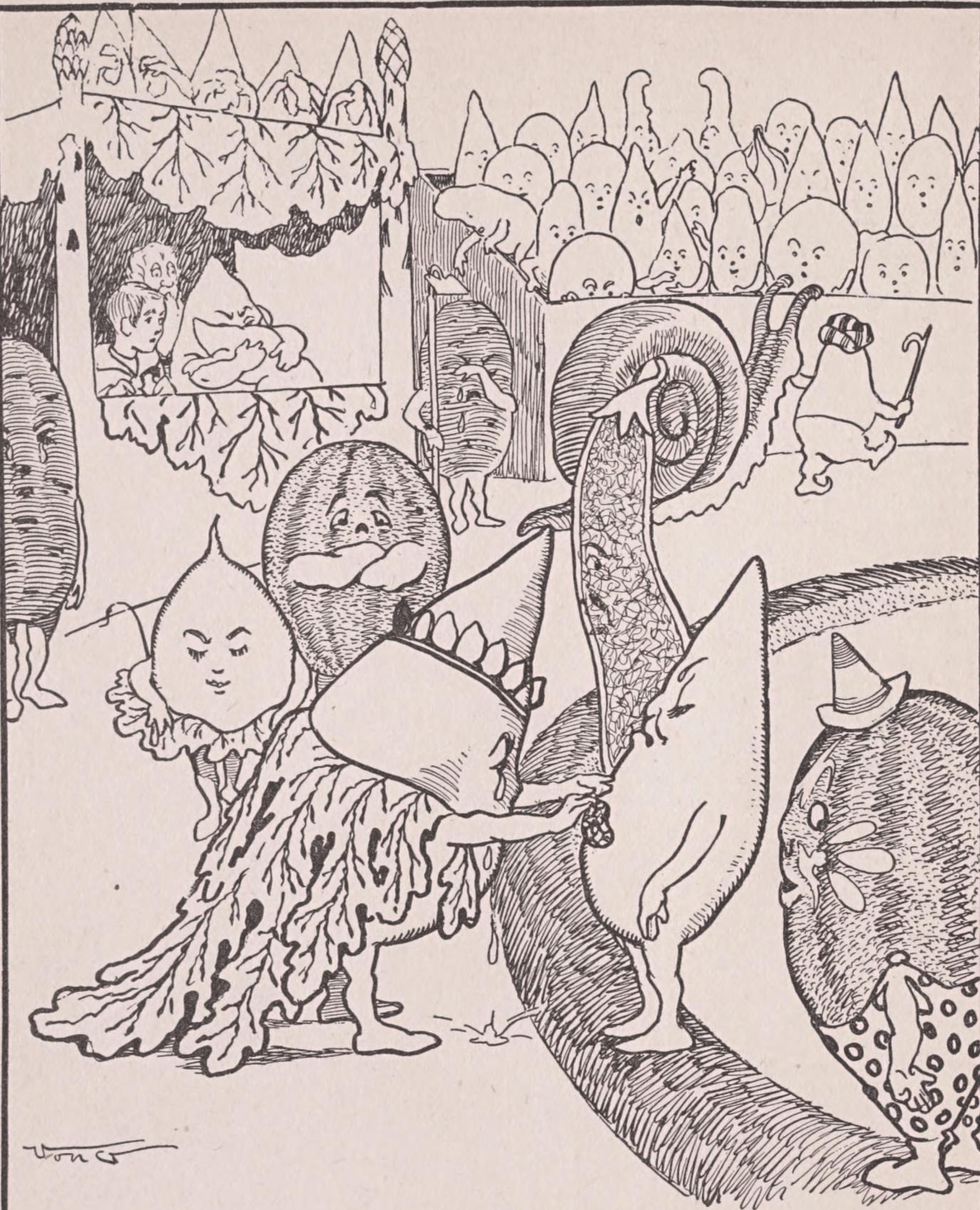
Professor De Radish on three well trained mice  
Next came in the ring and rode round in a trice,  
While Tootsie De Radish, the Queen of the Air,  
Did stunts that were thrilling and daring and rare.  
She stood on one hand that her proud father raised,  
Till all that looked on held their breath as they gazed.



The Pumpkin Stagecoach next came out with a dash,  
Its swift white mice ponies all under the lash,  
For Vegetable Red Men, with whoop and with yell,  
Had made an attack that was hard to repel.  
And when the dread scalping seemed just about due,  
The Halberds rushed up and the Indians flew.



While tumblers were vaulting the elephant snail  
The nurse of the Crown Prince let out a long wail.  
In watching the flipflaps they all did so well  
The princeling slipped from her and fell with a yell.  
A run and a jump and a somersault neat,  
And Carrot had caught the Crown Prince on his feet.



As hundreds about them gave vent to their joy  
The Queen hugged and wept o'er her terrified boy:  
The King sought brave Carrot, his eyes full of tears,  
And shrill were the bravos and loud were the cheers,  
As pinned on the breast of young Carrot was seen  
The Medal of Honor—a brown kidney bean!

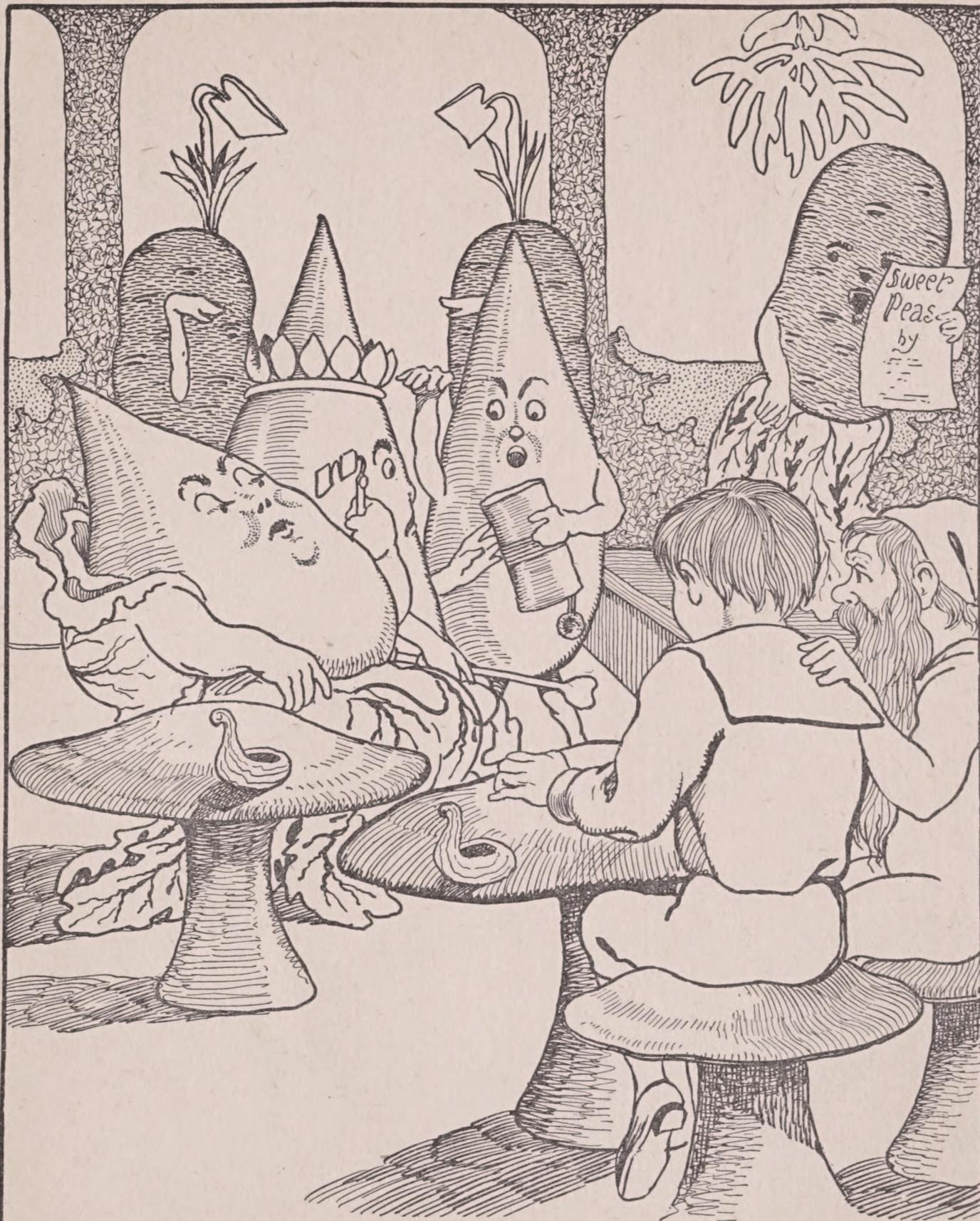


The Crown Prince and Willie, the Gnome, King and Queen,  
Next went where the animals fierce could be seen.  
Where red lizards ran up the cage walls in play  
And hoptoads hopped round in a hair raising way.  
"O mamma! O mamma!" the Prince cried in glee.  
"I want a nice toadhop to take home with me!"

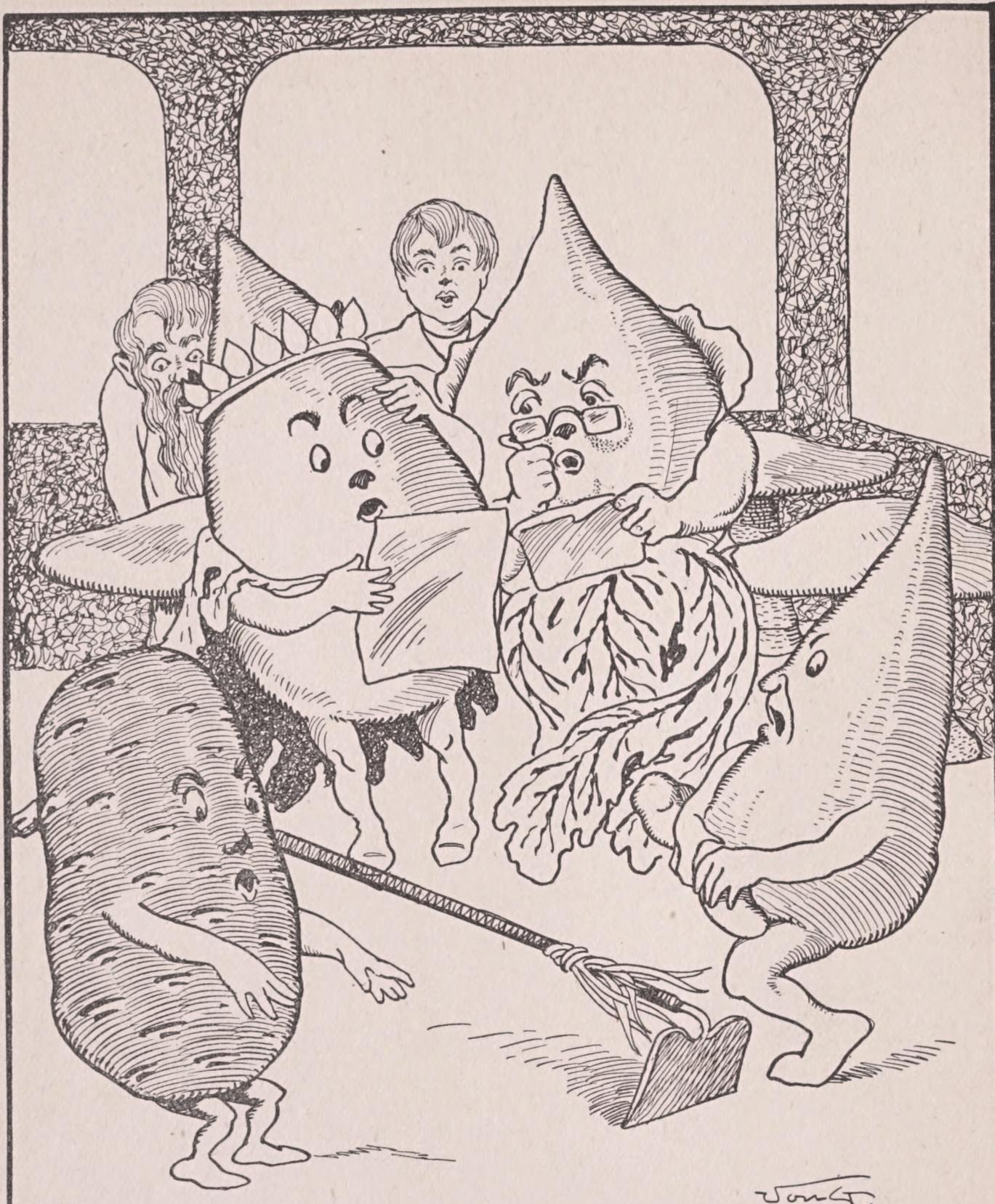


—VONG.

Two Heralds appeared, and each blew a loud blast;  
Our friends were all bound for the Palace at last.  
As onward they marched, each with dignified stride,  
The voice of the "Barker" was heard at one side:  
"Come in! Have a look! Have a look, all of you!  
For ten cents—a dime—all the freaks you may view!"



Soon after the circus an early rose dew  
Was served to our friends—a concoction quite new.  
While Halberds de Hoe stood on guard at the door  
Miss Daisy Potato sang songs by the score.  
She'd just struck her top note, a wonderful height,  
When in rushed a courier trembling with fright.



The King read the message: "Prepare for a siege!  
The army worm threatens our kingdom, your liege!"  
One guard was so scared by the terrible news  
His eyes opened wide and he shook in his shoes,  
And dropped in dismay on the messenger's toe  
His weapon of warfare, a big garden hoe.



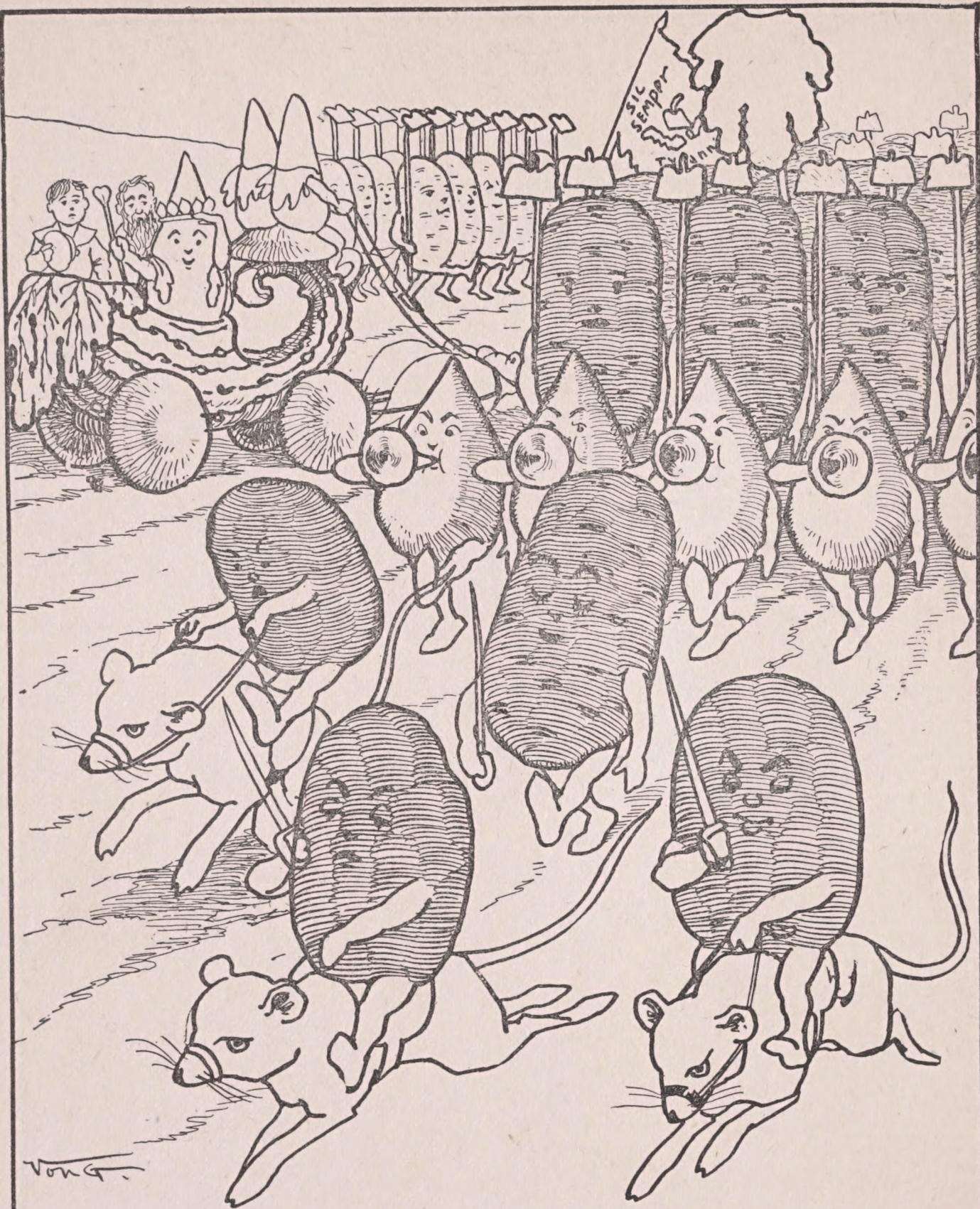
The Vegetables gathered from far and from near  
The news of the army worms' coming to hear.  
"You're loyal and brave," said the King, "and I know  
That all are quite willing, if wanted to go.  
As soon as the army of worms is in sight  
My Halberds de Hoe will lead on to the fight."



Each Halberd then off to the Armory ran,  
To win or to die like a brave 'tater man,  
And loud was the weeping of sweethearts and wives,  
Who feared that the Halberds would soon lose their lives.  
The cruel command was soon heard through the hall:  
"Attention De Hoes! Forward march, one and all!"

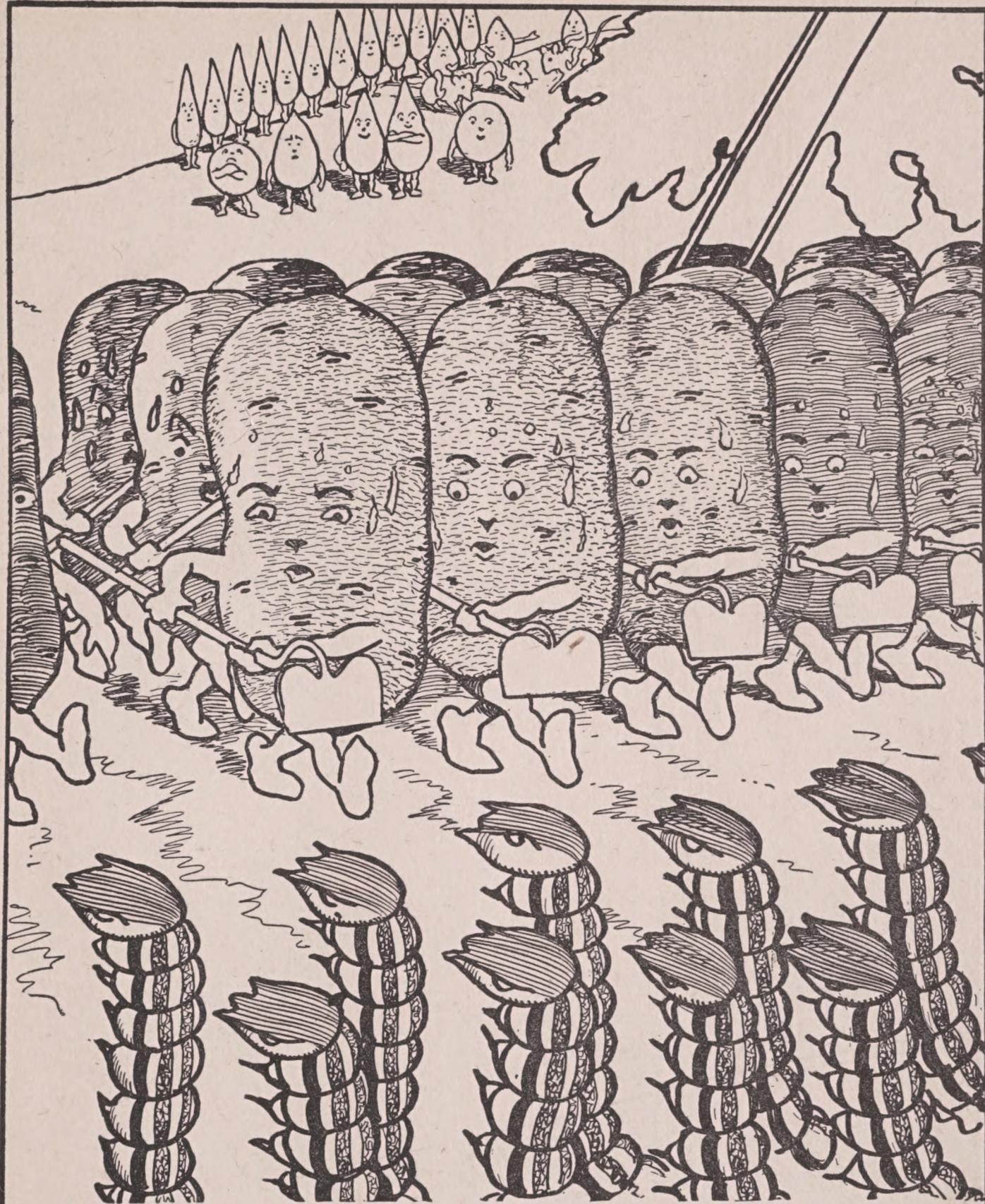


The Halberds de Hoe were all formed into line,  
And to them the Queen gave a banner quite fine.  
She spoke of the motto embroidered in red,  
Of glorified heroes both living and dead.  
"Sic semper tyrannis! Go forward, my Hoes,  
And under this banner deal death to our foes!"

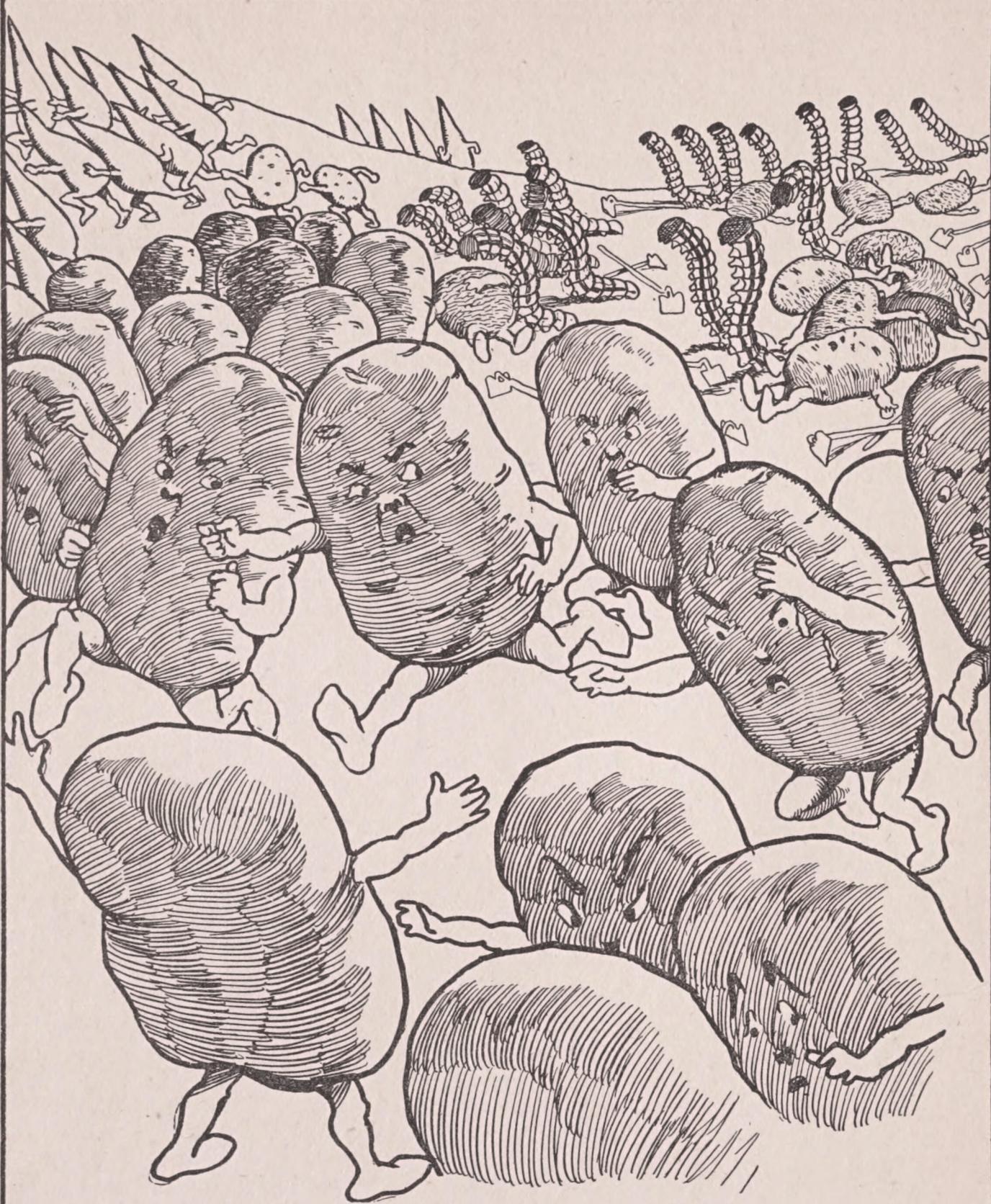


Wong.

*The Royal Squash Coach, bright in hue and four wheeled,  
By mice fleet and white was then drawn on the field.  
The King and our Willie in state had both come  
To see the Hoes march at the beat of the drum,  
And proud were the Hoes as that glorious day  
They passed in review on the way to the fray.*



The morn of the battle a voice loud and clear  
Cried "Charge!" and the Hoes gave a wild, ringing cheer.  
With long, swinging strides the command they obeyed,  
And moved toward their foes, who seemed quite undismayed;  
For, wholly unheeding the Hoes and their steel,  
The army worms flanked them by making a wheel.



The carnage that followed was awful to view  
As over the meadow *the Hoes* madly flew.  
The worms were all experts in making attacks  
And chased *the Hoes* fiercely to crawl up their backs.  
The Hoes dropped their weapons, and when all was o'er  
The worms had more hoes than a big hardware store.



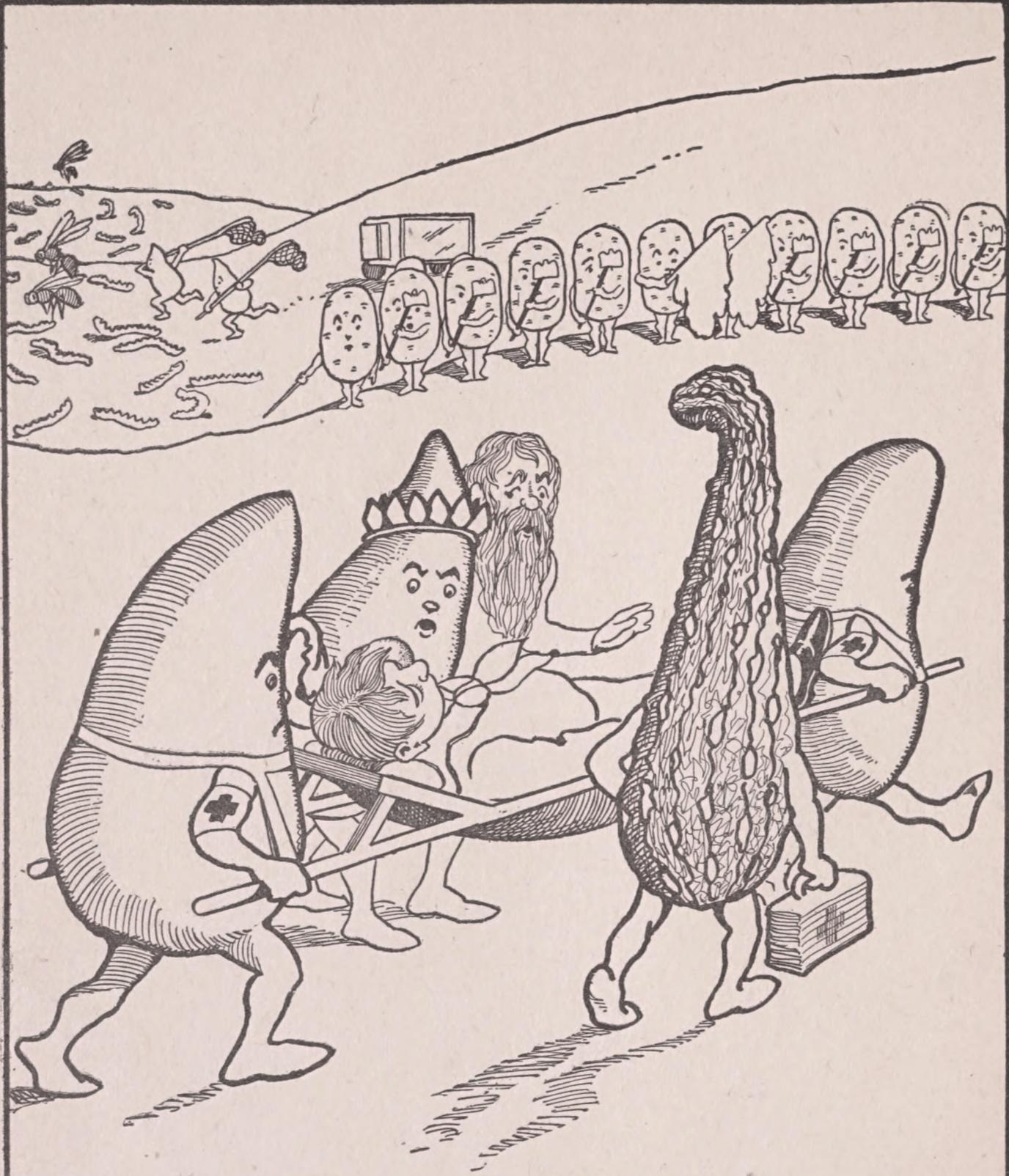
A council of war was then held by the King,  
Whose Wise Men of State could not think of a thing  
To stay the advance of the army worm horde  
Which into the Vegetable Kingdom now poured.  
Then up Willie jumped. "I've a scheme!" he declared.  
"Quick! Summon a swift aide if he can be spared!"



Once  
The aide came and went in the greatest of haste—  
He had not a moment to spare or to waste—  
And urged his white mouse, which was sturdy and fast,  
Until he arrived at the circus at last,  
And cried, "By this signet, the hoe of our King,  
"The Tiger Wasps to him at once you must bring!"



The Tiger Wasps' cage was at once trundled out  
In view of the worms all were anxious to rout.  
The door was then opened while Willie stood by,  
And out came the Wasps, one, two, three, on the fly;  
The King gave a shout, but his warning was vain—  
A Wasp stung poor Willie and gave him great pain.



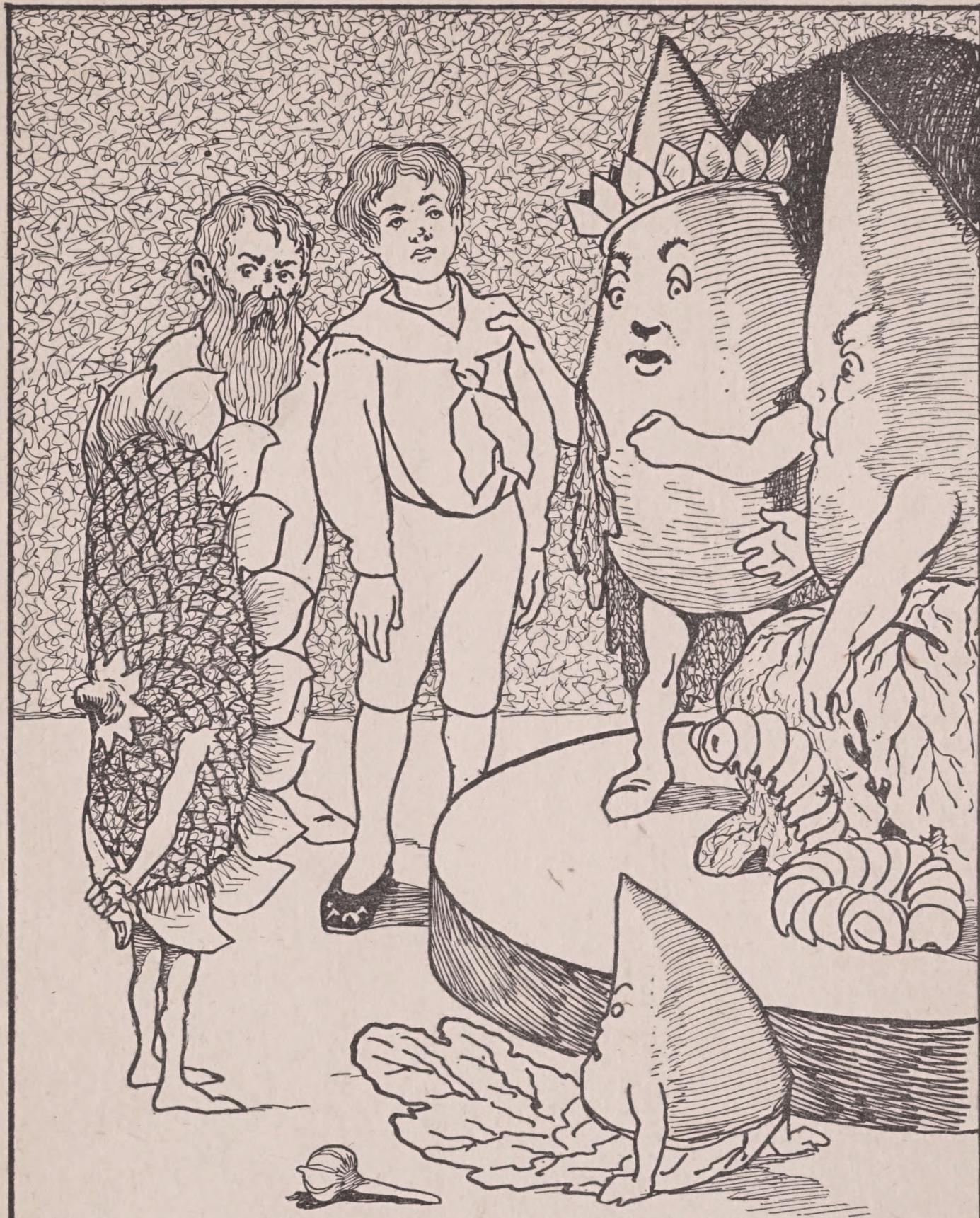
The army worms fled, but were soon out of breath;  
The Tiger Wasps chased them and stung them to death,  
While up on the bluff, with his face very sore,  
Our Willie was helped by the hospital corps.  
And, listless and pallid, our boy once so gay  
Was placed on a stretcher and carried away.



The war was now over and back from the fray  
Came Halberds de Hoe, who had all run away.  
But said they'd fight better on some future day.  
Their wounds were all healing and dried were their tears,  
And Willie, the boy who had routed their fears,  
Was hailed as a hero and given three cheers.



A banquet was held at the Palace and all  
The Vegetables came at the King's urgent call  
To hear Willie speak on "The Army Worm's Fall."  
While Willie described how their foes had all died  
A Sunflower was brought to the joyful King's side.  
"You come from the Land of the Flowers!" he cried.



The Sunflower came into the Court the next day  
To pilot the Gnome and our Willie away  
From King and from Queen and from Vegetable Land  
And show them the Kingdom of Flowers, as planned.  
The King said to Willie, "We wish you much joy,  
And Pepper, our artist, must paint you, my boy."



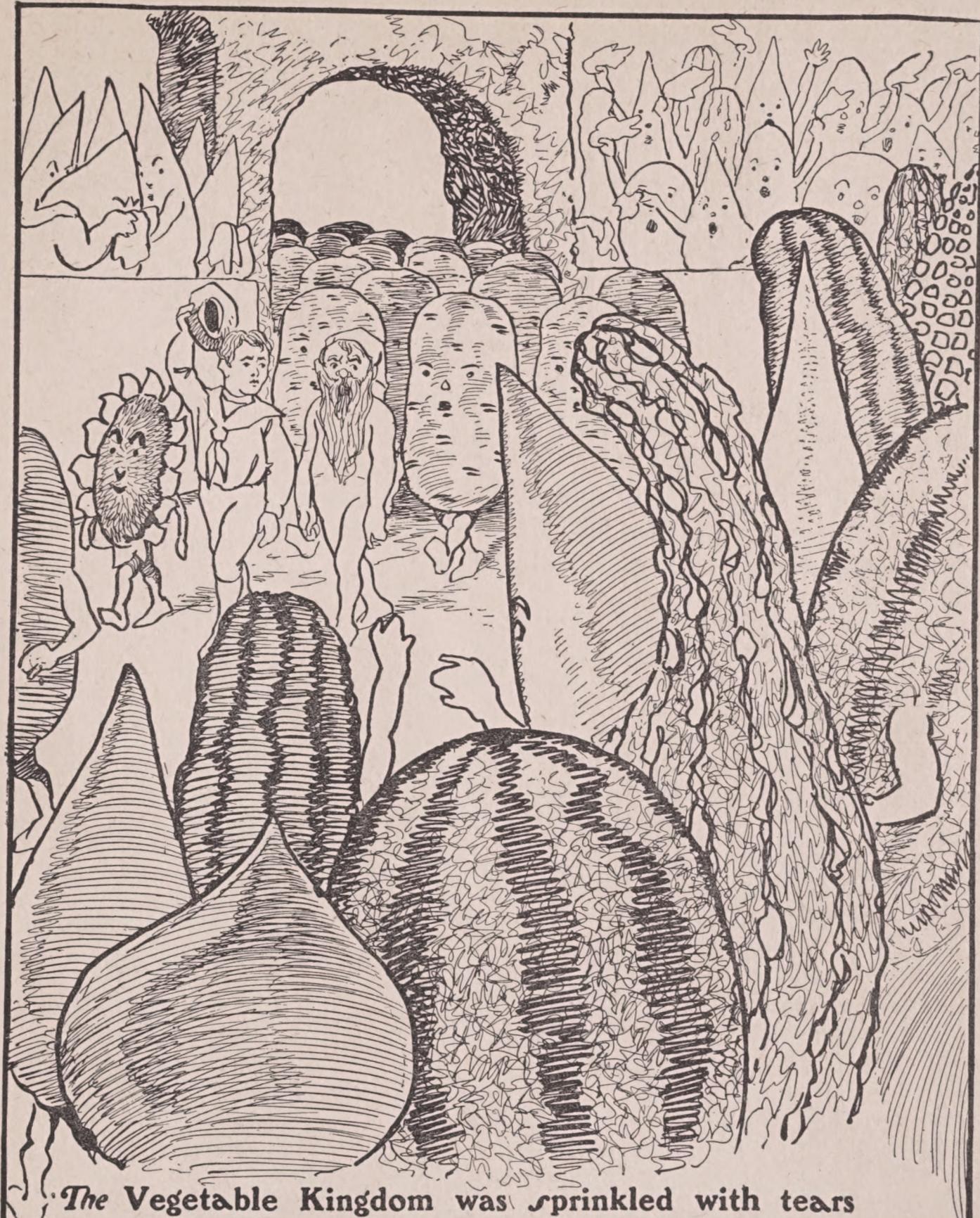
Then, posed on a toadstool, our Willie stood still  
While Pepper, the artist, with all of his skill,  
On canvas placed Willie by royal command,  
Our Willie, the Hero of Vegetable Land.  
"He looks like a Radish!" the King cried in glee.  
"And that," murmured Pepper, "is true art, you see!"



The Order of Hoebites, most secret and grand,  
Was joined by our Willie in Vegetable Land.  
"Wherever they wander," said Grand Master Corn,  
"The sign of the Hoebites will help the forlorn."  
"When you are in trouble," said Radish, High Chief,  
"Just wiggle your ears and you'll soon get relief."



That night in the Palace a map was unrolled  
And hung on the wall and our Willie was told  
How, leaving the Vegetable Kingdom behind,  
A tourist the Kingdom of Flowers could find.  
"The way is not easy," the Sunflower made clear,  
"But trust to my guidance and be of good cheer."



The Vegetable Kingdom was sprinkled with tears  
When Willie set out amid weeping and cheers.  
The Vegetable People in line stood for hours  
To see him set out for the Kingdom of Flowers.  
The Gnome and the Sunflower were both at his side,  
The Gnome as companion, the Sunflower as guide.



The King and his nobles had carefully planned  
To go to the edge of the Vegetable Land,  
And there amid weeping and sorrowful groans  
They saw Willie enter the Forest of Cones.  
He waved a goodby to the Vegetable Clan,  
Then off toward the Kingdom of Flowers he ran.

THE END.







# In Gnome M Land

By  
Vonc



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